

July 6, 2023



FROM THE DESK OF  
COMMISSIONER  
BRENT BAILEY  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



*The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.*

*Brent Bailey*



## As Scammers Get More Sophisticated, Keep Your Guard Up

**T**his office often learns of various utility scams directed at consumers and then does our best to warn you of them and what to look for in order to protect yourself. Last week, Atmos Energy [shared the news](#) of a new “Search Engine Phishing” scam technique where cybercriminals use search engine optimization to place a fake website into a browser’s top search results.

Any user who clicks on one of these “spoofed” websites will be redirected to what looks like a legitimate Atmos Energy page, but that fake page will feature a fake customer service phone number and other false information. If a customer calls the fake customer service phone number, he or she may be asked to provide login credentials or other sensitive information that the scammers can leverage to compromise bank, credit card, or other accounts belonging to the customer.

Other utility scams include the following: Threats to disconnect service unless a payment is made; Claims that you overpaid a bill and your account information is needed to issue a refund; Requests for payment per the replacement of a meter or other equipment; Offers of bill payment assistance with the promise of a reduced rate via a state or federal program; Scammer posing as utility worker may knock on your door and claim to need to inspect utility-related equipment; Offers to restore power more quickly in the aftermath of a severe storm if a customer pays an upfront “restoration fee.”

Scams succeed because they look like the real thing and catch you off guard when you’re not expecting it. And scammers continue getting smarter, more savvy and utilizing new technologies to convince you to send them your money or personal details. Scams target people of all backgrounds, ages and income levels. Be alert, know who you are dealing with, protect your personal information and if it looks too good to be true, it probably is!

Beware of **fake utility websites** that appear in search results or web ads that direct you to call a **phony customer service number**.





*Continued...*

The Mississippi Public Service Commission and its utility partners will continue to spread the word about utility scams and how to protect yourself, your family and your community. Utilities across the state have resources and tools to help you be better informed against scams as well as actions you can take to keep your information, your property and your money safe and secure

- Entergy Mississippi wants to help you [#StopScams - Know the Signs](#)
- Mississippi Power wants to [Protect You Against Fraud](#)
- Atmos Energy offers [Tips to Avoid Being Scammed](#)
- CenterPoint Energy wants to [Help You Fight Utility Scammers](#)
- Spire Energy will help you [Stay Safe from Scams](#)
- Other resources: [Better Business Bureau Scam Tracker](#); [Utilities United Against Scams](#); [Federal Trade Commission](#); [AARP](#)



## **Armed with Information from Former MPSC No Call Specialists, Attorney General Sues Two Companies**

Attorney General Lynn Fitch has [filed lawsuits](#) against two companies for placing nearly 1,000 unauthorized calls to Mississippians on the "Do Not Call" list in violation of the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act. The two companies being sued by the state are The Depository Trust and Clearing Corporation and NaturaLawn of America.

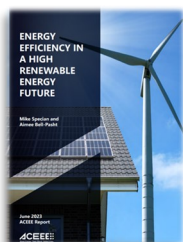
For more than a year, MPSC No Call Specialists had been receiving and filing complaints regarding the two above companies, investigating the legality of the calls placed to Mississippians, and built a record of alleged violations upon which the lawsuit was crafted. Beginning July 1, 2023, all aspects of enforcement of the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act were transferred to the Attorney General's Office. This now includes their receiving, filing and investigating complaints from customers, as well as providing the prosecution of those telemarketers who violate Mississippi law. Through HB 1225, the Mississippi Legislature felt that consolidating all functions of receiving complaints, investigating the alleged violation, and prosecuting violators would create efficiencies and best serve the public rather than having two agencies share the enforcement of the state's telemarketing laws.

**You must visit <https://nocallportal.ago.ms.gov/> to file a No Call Complaint. To register with the no call list, visit [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov). For further questions or concerns regarding telemarketing and robocalls, call the Attorney General's Office at (800) 281-4418. The MS No Call app will be available in August. Search for 'MS No Call App' in your carriers' app store.**

## **On the Central District Reading List**

New reports and studies regarding many different aspects of utility regulation, energy resources, changes in energy demand, customer issues, emerging technologies and more come across my desk on a regular basis. The information contained in these new reports help to inform the Commission and stakeholders. I hope you will check some of them out for yourselves!

## **Energy Efficiency More Critical than Ever to Reduce Costs**



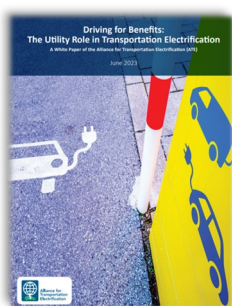
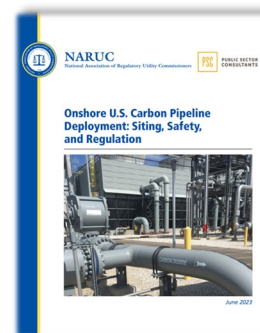
The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy's (ACEEE) [new report](#) evaluated five U.S. grid regions (California, Texas, the Pacific Northwest, the Southeast, and the Midwest) and found that a package of energy efficiency upgrades can reduce costs that would otherwise be passed on to customers by \$10 billion to \$19 billion annually per region by 2050. Efficiency upgrades that reduce energy use from building heating and cooling (such as improved insulation, air sealing, and high-efficiency heat pumps) deliver the most energy savings, followed by residential heat pump water heaters.





## Federal, State Carbon Dioxide Pipeline Regulation

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) released a new report, [\*Onshore U.S. Carbon Pipeline Deployment: Siting, Safety, and Regulation\*](#), that explores barriers and opportunities for the deployment of carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) technology. CCUS technology has significant potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in hard-to-decarbonize industrial and commercial sectors. Carbon capture technologies can isolate carbon dioxide emissions from fuel-intensive industrial processes or power generation. Unless utilization or storage occurs at the same location as carbon capture, carbon must be transported from a point source to a utilization or storage site. Pipelines offer advantages for large-scale transportation of carbon dioxide over other methods. The report serves as a primer for regulators and stakeholders who seek to better understand the state and federal regulatory challenges, public concerns about safety, and opportunities facing the transport of carbon dioxide via pipeline.

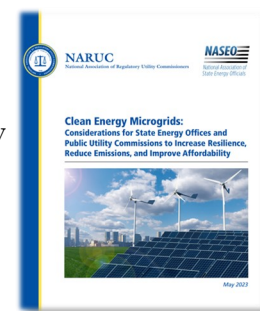


## Utility Investments in Electric Vehicle Support Infrastructure

The Alliance for Transportation Electrification (ATE) recently released a new white paper, [\*Driving for Benefits: The Utility Role in Transportation Electrification\*](#). The purpose of the analysis is to outline the electric utility's role in transportation electrification and discuss impacts both for the consumer and for the electric grid. Utility involvement in transportation electrification is focused primarily in three areas: (1) investment in the grid (generation, transmission and distribution) to serve EV charging needs; (2) make-ready investments needed between the utility's distribution system and the stub at which the charging ports will be installed; and (3) possible ownership and operation of charging stations, often in partnership with private third-parties.

## Potential Benefits of Clean Energy Microgrids in the States

NARUC and NASEO released a report, [\*Clean Energy Microgrids: Considerations for State Energy Offices and Public Utility Commissions to Increase Resilience, Reduce Emissions, and Improve Affordability\*](#), offers states actionable policy and regulatory considerations to facilitate construction of clean energy microgrids by local governments, state institutions, mission-critical facilities and businesses. Along with outlining the benefits and challenges of clean energy microgrids, the report offers economic and cost considerations, necessary technological components, future clean technologies, and policy and regulatory considerations for State Energy Offices and Public Utility Commissions.



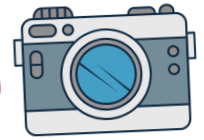
## Last Week at the MPSC

- Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC filed its [\*Supplemental Schedules\*](#) in regards to the Petition of **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** for Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity for the Provision of Wastewater Disposal Service in **Harrison** (Superior Utilities, Inc.), **Hinds** (Siwell Utility Co., Inc.), and **Rankin** (Rolling Hills Wastewater, Inc.) **Counties**.
- Bee Lake Farm LLC** filed its [\*Motion to Intervene\*](#) in the Petition by **Southern Cross Transmission LLC** for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for the Proposed Southern Cross Transmission Project.
- Mississippi Power Company** made its annual [\*Estimated Avoided Costs\*](#) filing for 2023 to make available for public inspection.





# CENTRAL DISTRICT SNAPS



*Last week, we returned to Mississippi Power Company's Plant Ratcliffe in Kemper County to get an update on improvements and modifications made at the plant coming off a major maintenance outage. Additionally, we observed the continued demolition activities associated with the former TRIG technology portion of the plant site. At any given time of the year, Plant Ratcliffe is producing up to 2/3 of the power being consumed by customers of MS Power. Plant Ratcliffe is also the cleanest, most efficient plant in MS Power Company's fleet.*



*We visited with staff at Mississippi Power's Meridian Service Center. Got to see firsthand the different safety equipment materials they test to send to their sister power companies, including Georgia Power. Additionally, we received a breakdown of the process used to test and verify their AMI meters.*



# FROM THE DESK OF COMMISSIONER BRENT BAILEY CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE



*We also had the opportunity to make our way over to Mississippi Power's Plant Sweatt. Plant Sweatt was Mississippi Power's second power generating plant. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Plant Sweatt established a reputation for dependable generation for extended periods of time, and on short notice. It supplied the bulk of electricity to Mississippi Power customers in Meridian and the surrounding area. Today, the plant houses a 39 MW natural gas combustion turbine and 2 nat gas fired steam turbines, each approximately 200 MW and both retired in 2014.*



*Last Friday, we said farewell to Stacy Harrell! Stacy has been the Central District's No Call Administrator for 11 years taking calls and complaints from hundreds of thousands of Mississippians. Before that, she worked as a Utility Complaint Specialist for 10 years. As she embarks on a new chapter of her journey, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for her contributions and wish her nothing but success and happiness in all of her future endeavors. We have no doubt that she will continue to shine brightly and make a positive impact. Thank you, Stacy!*



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **48** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	38
Telecommunications	6
Water/Sewer	4



The Central District conducted our routine pre-docket meeting this morning ahead of July's monthly docket meeting on Tuesday, July 11.

The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. in the PSC Hearing Room on the 1st floor in the Woolfolk State Office Building. The meeting will also be broadcasted at:  
<https://www.psc.ms.gov/webcast>